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185
159 to start with, you're going to have to *become* a registered citizen if you join.
And we ask every individual to pay twenty-five cent per month. For what?
474 Just in case when you go into these unjust courts, your money pools and
592 somebody'll stand the bonds, or pay the fine. Now things are changed. The time would come when this same magistrate who have never listened to Negroes would need their vote.

159 One year when he ran for the third time, the white folks decided to vote
179 against him--not all the white folks, just about fifty percent of them. And
222 he was thinking about dropping out of the election. He came to me and ask,
666 "What can you all do? I understand that the white folks is against me
664 because in the court sometime ago I was little bit lenience with Negro."
185 So I told him if he would promise that he would treat Negroes better, make them realize that they are human being when they come into the court, not charge them for everything or just assume that they are wrong, but just give them what belongs to them--if they are right, let them know they are right--I said, "We will vote for you. We got a few Negroes voting. If you got fifty percent of your people, the rest of the Negroes certainly would turn the tide."

And when that night came, he won by the many Negroes had registration certificate. That change the situation. That magistrate now, whenever our people go into the court, he is very frank and fair with us. And so for that reason, we felt like the more we could get people registered, the better it would be.

Mrs. Alice Wine

HE IS A WONDERFUL CONQUEROR

159
474 We start the Progressive Club with about two or three hundred head of people in '48 or '49. We used to meet in Moving Star Hall every third Sunday and pay twenty-five cents a head. And after we done pay out for that piece of property we got now, we stop paying monthly dues.

159 There was a schoolhouse there, but we turn 'em into a store after we
443 buy 'em. We put all our money together and open 'em up. And we call 'em
474 Progressive Club. We been growing and growing. We is still in debt, but
185 we are going on. And Mr. Jenkins, he is so good, he is so kind, so soft-

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We always told the teachers that if there wasn't an organization in their community, organize that first class into a community organization so that they would meet once a month and could get information about what was going on in their community, what they needed to do, how they needed to pressure their local government about certain things, what they could get from the federal government. And to always try to bring someone in who had some information in those fields, so that it would be a continuing, educating process.

In the summer of 1961 the program was transferred to the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. SCLC continued to do what we had started to do when we had the program at Highlander and that was have organizations send representation to them for a one-week workshop—for teacher training. Then they would go back into their areas. They came from Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi.

Mrs. Septima Clark

THE CITIZENSHIP SCHOOLS WERE THE BASE ON WHICH THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT WAS BUILT

We were trying to make teachers out of people who could barely read and write. But they could teach. The people who left these training sessions went home to teach and to work in voter registration drives. They went home, and they didn't take it anymore. They started their own citizenship classes, discussing the problems in their own towns. "How come the pavement stops where the black section begins?" Asking questions like that, and then knowing who to go to to talk about that or where to protest it.

One time I heard Andy Young say that the citizenship schools were the base on which the whole civil rights movement was built. And that's probably very much true.

It's true because the citizenship schools made people aware of the political situation in their area. We recruited the wise leaders of their communities, like Fannie Lou Hamer in Mississippi. Hosea Williams started out as a citizenship school supervisor. The citizenship school classes formed the grassroot basis of new statewide political organizations in South Carolina, Georgia, and Mississippi. From one end of the South to the other, if you look at the black elected officials and the political leaders, you find people who had their first involvement in the training program of the citizenship school.

It was 1962 before the major civil rights groups were ready to do something about voter registration. But we had developed the ideas of the citizenship schools between 1957 and 1961. So all the civil rights groups could use our kind of approach because by then we knew it worked.